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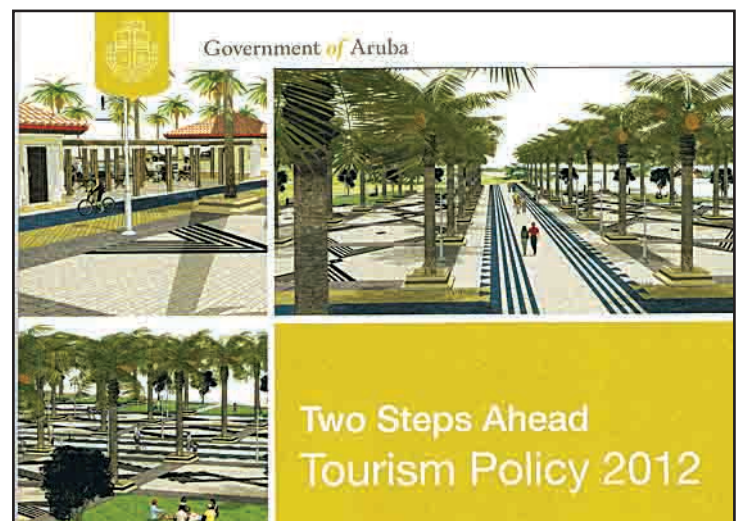
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A "how to" on "winning the future" with a strategic tourism plan from Dr. Robertico Croes

A former Aruban Minister of Tourism, Dr. Robertico Croes, now occupies the Interim Chair Tourism Events & Attractions and is Associate Dean at the Dick Pope Senior Institute of Tourism Studies, Rosen College of Hospitality Management at the University of Central Florida.

His study along with colleague at UCF, Dr. Manuel Rivera, will be the foundation for Aruba tourism strategies in the coming years. When introducing him to an audience of tourism stakeholders at all levels to open the Aruba Tourism

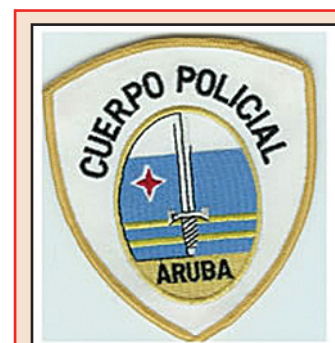


Finally, Dutch apologise for Indonesian massacre

The Dutch ambassador to Indonesia has formally apologised on behalf of the Netherlands' government for the 1947 massacre in a village on Java island, in an emotional ceremony on the anniversary of the executions.

half of the Dutch government, I apologise for the tragedy that took place in Rawagede on the 9 December 1947," the Netherlands' ambassador to Indonesia, Tjeerd de Zwaan, said.

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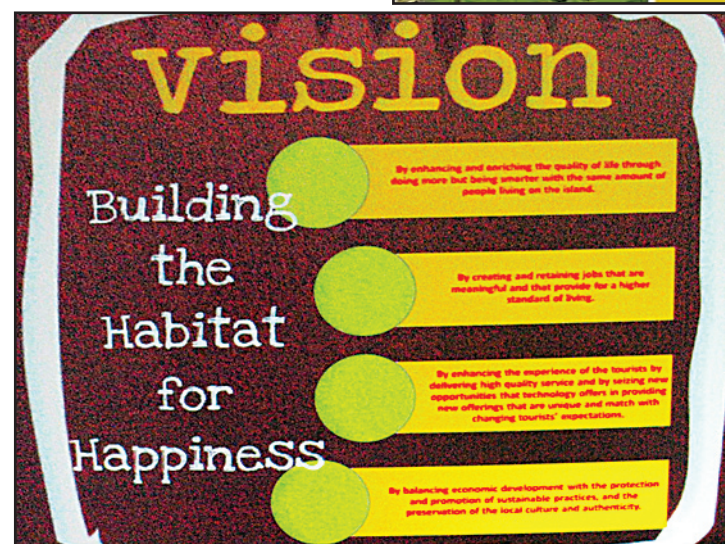


Announcement by the Aruba Police Force regarding the 2012 number plates

The Aruba Police Force announces that together with the SIAD – the Aruba Tax Office - it was decided not to fine motorists who have their 2012 number plates on their vehicles before January 1, 2012. Vehicles with the 2012 number plates are a clear sign that the annual motor vehicle tax has been paid, thus there is no reason to fine motorists for complying with their tax obligation.

However, the Aruba Police Force emphasizes the importance of disposing of the 2011 number plates responsibly. Do not misuse, or let anyone else misuse the 2011 number plates. If a motorist is caught using 2011 plates that doesn't belong to them, the owner of said number plates will be fined.

It is advised to keep this in mind and dispose of 2011 number plate in a responsible manner.



Summit 2012, this past Thursday afternoon, Minister of Tourism, Transport & Labor, Otmar Oduber, explained this study was done with not only the purpose of examining the status of Aruba's tourism industry, but divining what practices need be put in place to make this pillar of the island's economy also socially effective. Rather than existing to the detriment of the fabric of Aruba's environment, culture and heritage, how can it be directed to enhance these qualities and so motivate the populace? The purpose of this study is to present a blueprint for a sustainable tourism industry and society on an island with extremely limited natural resources beyond beautiful beaches and an open-hearted

hospitable, service oriented work force.

Dr. Croes headed a team of six researchers from UCF, which deployed a large force of hospitality majors at the Uni-

versity of Aruba and the EPI Vocational School. They interviewed thousands of tourists, both existing and potential, along with industry workers, stakeholders and the island population. They then examined and interpreted the data using various models: Econometric, Analysis of Variance, Factor, Cluster, Conjoint and Path Analysis and Multiple Regressions.

The team had three questions to answer:

- Can the current model of tourism specialization be sustained in the future?
- Are the changing tastes and preferences affecting production and consumption?
- Can we articulate a strategy that aligns tourism development & quality of life?

Continued on page 2





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Finally, Dutch apologise

Continued from page 1

He then repeated the apology in the Indonesian language, to the applause of hundreds of people attending the ceremony, some of whom broke down in tears as they listened in front of a marble monument commemorating the dead.

The number of victims has always a point of dispute between the Dutch and the Indonesians. Dutch officials claim some 150 people were killed, but a support group and the local community allege the death toll was 431.

During Indonesia's fight for independence between 1945 and 1949 - in what became known as the Indonesian National Revolution - Dutch troops swooped into the village of Rawagede and executed its men and boys as their families and neighbours looked on.

In a landmark ruling last

September, a civil court in The Hague found the Dutch state responsible for the executions and ruled in favour of eight widows and a survivor of the massacre who lodged the case. Two of the widows have since died, and so has the survivor, Saih Bin Sakam, who passed away in May at the age of 88.

The Netherlands agreed to pay 850,000 euros to the community before the court's decision, and will now pay an additional 180,000 euros in compensation to the plaintiffs or their families.

Although the Dutch government in the past expressed "deep regret" over the conduct of some of its troops in pre-independence Indonesia, it had never formally apologised for any excesses, including the massacre at Rawagede.

Video emerges of American who went missing in Iran

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The family of a retired FBI agent who went missing in Iran in 2007 released a proof-of-life video yesterday showing him held hostage by unknown kidnappers and issuing a simple plea to US officials: "please help me get home."

American Robert Levinson

appeared weary and thin but unharmed in the footage, the first substantial evidence that he is alive and being held against his will.

The year-old video was posted online accompanied by footage of his wife and son pleading to his captors to free the 63-year-old father of seven.

Strategic tourism plan from Dr. Robertico Croes ...

Continued from page 1

The team's findings basically indicated that Aruba's tourism entities cannot keep doing business exactly as they have for the past 25 years; in their opinion, this will not be a formula for sustained success. "Though the product is strong there are some challenges ahead, which if not addressed thoroughly and in a timely manner, could lead to unwanted and perverse circumstances."

The stated purpose of the tourism study and their conclusions is to "start a national discussion on the new tourism agenda," which requires a participatory process not only from those who directly profit from the industry, but all aspects of the island society, as the income from tourism does impact most demographics, even if they are not aware of this.

It was acknowledged that the branding of "One Happy Island" is strong and backed up by the surveys and Arubans do measure very high up on the "happiness scale" compared to a large percentage of developed nations, and may actually hold the top spot within the region. However, can it be sustained?

Aruba presently enjoys a strong and dedicated group of annual visitors, many who own timesharing or have gone on to purchase homes on the island. However, this extremely loyal base of Baby Boomers and somewhat older are approaching an age and circumstances which may pass on their properties to a younger generation that do not harbor the same feelings. What is termed the "Waning Affluentials" or "Gen X" are so not necessarily because of any dissatisfaction with Aruba as a destination, but simply a propensity to continually move on to a new experience; when surveyed, it was found they would highly



recommend the island, but were looking forward to the next place to visit as a matter of course.

Another group examined was the upcoming generation of vacationers - "Gen Y" who embody the categorization of "Waxing Influentials." It is felt that this new crop of dedicated visitors look beyond the traditional attractions of sun, sea and sand towards more vigorous activities and primarily, the opportunity to interact with island residents and enjoy an authentic cultural experience. "Consumption patterns are changing, and new motivations" were cited. An example of what is a very strong asset for this group is Aruba's many fine restaurants; this was actually revealed as outdistancing the traditional sun, sea and sand as a motivator, as well as the diversity of activities offered.

Negative factors to Aruba's tourism industry at present appear to be "stagnating innovativeness and creativity," as well as a lack of communication among various sectors and what graphs show to be a distinct drop in real goods productivity. Ever-increasing business costs, and a disinclination to invest unless certain of a positive return, are also attributed with

slowing down the advancement and refinement of Aruba's tourism product to meet the demands of changing times and markets, as well as a reluctance to share ideas for fear they will be copied, resulting in further diminishing returns.

The panel Q & A following Dr. Croes' presentation congratulated him on the work and had some pertinent questions regarding some of his findings, with more than one expressing that the issue of airlift and the volatile energy market which affects it was not sufficiently addressed. For the island of Aruba, this is an extreme point of interest, in their opinion. Aruba Tourism Authority CEO Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes also expressed the opinion that stay over tourism and cruise tourism are two vastly separate aspects of the industry, each with its own issues and requirements.

The study details five distinct challenges and four particular policy suggestions for answering them and attaining the "Habitat for Happiness." These are all detailed in the study and the Strategic Plan which will be released in February, for which the Ministry of Tourism is taking advance orders.

by Rosalie Klein

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Public Employees to receive cost of living adjustment

ORANJESTAD -- Around 7:00 pm on Thursday evening a concrete agreement was reached between the government and a majority of unions representing civil employees. Immediately following the agreement a Bilateral Agreement between government and unions on the issue of cost of living adjustment was signed. Of the nine union groups with representation of civil servants, only the TOPA refused to sign. TOPA's argument for not signing the agreement is because they are of the opinion that the adjustment amount should be entered into the employees salaries.

Since November, a dialogue has been undergoing between government and the unions together with their advisers to try and come up with



a just cost of living adjustment that would satisfy all employees and that would be feasible for Public Finance.

According to the Prime Minister, "we have reached an agreement for the cost of living adjustment for 2012, and for

the catch up maneuver for the ensuing years, an 8% which was pending from 2008, and an agreement as to how we will proceed in the future with respect to, the process of cost of living adjustments."

The Prime Minister also re-

marked that, even though TOPA did not sign the agreement, he is convinced that they are in agreement with the overall concept of the protocol. Their only difference of opinion had to do with only one aspect of the agreement.

This agreement is very important, said Eman, because it entails the fundamental rights that employees have in our country. The government has confirmed that their loss of buying power has caused much suffering for many years.

Between 2001 and 2008 there has not been any salary adjustment for public servants and the delay that this has caused was great which made it difficult to determine what amount would be appropriate to pay for the cost of living adjustment for this long period. They also agreed that as of 2013 they will begin recovering the 8% that was lost between a 3 to 5 years period.

Continued on page 5



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Street football World Championship in Aruba next year

ORANJESTADS -- At the close of the Happy Community Conference held here this past week, the government announced that they have reached an agreement with football star Edgar Davids to hold a world championship street football event here in Aruba in the month of December. During the entire year there will be street football tournaments organized that will ultimately culminate with the world championship. Edgar Davids has promised his support and assistance with the organization of the event and will also be present himself.

Davids who was a keynote speaker on the last day of the Happy Community Conference explained something of the work being done by the "Street Football League of the Netherlands (SVBN) in which he is directly involved.

Together with Tan and many other Dutchmen known to the world of sports, music and dance, SVBN organizes street football tournaments in the barrios needing positive attention.

According to Davids, "...we stimulate the citizens of the barrios to join with us and organize tournaments. Not only football tournaments, but



many other things common to football. Music, food and drinks are always plentiful, making each event a real big fiesta."

Davids has noted that the football tournaments have a very positive effect on the barrios. People put aside their cultural differences and discover what unites them. They communicate with each other. Young people have something pleasant to do, and are stimulated to go to school and put their talents to good use.

Davids encouraged the government of Aruba to work together on realizing this project. He said, "Aruba should be able to practice street football. Aruba does not need any help from abroad to do this, and I would be delighted to come back periodically to play some football."

Home & Nature serenades their loyal patrons with a concert for the 10th anniversary

The owners of Home & Nature, located on the Avenida Milio Croes in Dakota, had a unique vision for success ten years ago: offer high quality furniture and decorative pieces direct from Indonesia, at excellent prices. Ten years later, after accruing a loyal clientele, they demonstrated their gratitude to their patrons with a spectacular 10th anniversary celebration in the garden section on Thursday evening, December 8.

Fernando, DJ and Manager Rene van der Mijde welcomed all to a concert by Michelangelo Koolman and his com-



Rene with DJ and Fernando at the mike



rades, some of Aruba's finest musicians, most of whom have established international reputations. Angelo had the audi-

ence swaying along to some of their local favorites, as well as a selection of popular music from around the world. Joining him on stage were Hilward Croes on keyboard and founder of the Caribbean Sea Jazz Festival, Erik Eman on bass.

Home & Garden was discovered by savvy shoppers seeking to decorate their homes in striking style that is perfectly in tune with Aruba's tropical climate. All their pieces are made of solid Indonesian teak, which is naturally infused with a special oil that repels the sort of pests prevalent in this environment that are so damaging to wood. The shop also guarantees their inventory, with a resident carpenter ready to do any repairs.

Those joining the Home & Garden crew, Rene and his staff of stylists: Giny, Silvia, Denise and Saskia, were eager to look over

the store's latest acquisitions; the shop unload a container of new inventory monthly. Presently, aside from their stunning tables, beds, roll-top desks and other singular items, they have a large selection of festive holiday knick-knacks for dressing up the home at the end of the year.

Home & Garden describes their premises as "a place to not only browse, but relax and be inspired." Friends found their humdinger of an anniversary party, with an endless flow of fine wine, was equally inspiring to their charming decorating ideas!

By Rosalie Klein





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Public Employees to receive cost of living adjustment

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As it now stands, as of 2012 public employees will receive an increase of Afls.140 on top of their salaries as of their first pay check in January 2012. They will also receive the so-called "Bashi Premie" in January which will be increased from Afls.1000 to Afls.1350. The 8% as stipulated in the 2008 protocol will be recovered in a 3 to 5 years period, obviously within the context of inflation.

The catch up maneuver cannot take more than 5 years. They also agreed that in 2012 they will continue to deliberate on what is the best process to follow to achieve an agreement on cost of living adjustments. This will afford all employees more transparency and clarity of their rights and it will at the same time allow the government to have this better anchored in their budgets.

The government applauded the manner in which the unions deliberated; their mature, serious and intensive approach was exemplary. Today we can look back at a process which was completed in earnest, in a just and open manner, according to the Prime Minister.

All Aruba is totally psyched for this Sunday's SETAR Mobile Bazaar!

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SETAR clients eagerly anticipate this annual money-saving event. Veteran customers can be found camping in front of the SETAR Main Building at Seroe Blanco to be sure to get the best bargains this Sunday at SETAR'S Mobile Bazaar, which has become a holiday tradition for islanders. This year is the tenth anniversary of this traditional Christmas event, so visitors can expect some extra-special surprises.

As SETAR is also celebrating its 25th anniversary as Aruba's own telecommunications company, it is offering customers the opportunity to participate in a raffle with the chance to win a VIP pass, allowing them to be the first to enter tomorrow when the doors open at SETAR headquarters in Seroe Blanco.

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There will be entertainment from a number of popular gaita groups and the band Extreme, who will entertain until the evening and from 3:00 to 5:00



p.m. There will be fun games and activities for children with Party Animals and a Dino Jump and Trampoline to entertain the kids while parents do their shopping plus free popcorn and treats. There will be different games for the grown-ups with fabulous prizes; all culminating in a surprise show grand finale.

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starts tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. and the cellular sales close at 7:00 p.m. afterwards, the entertainment starts and will last until 10:00 p.m.

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TUESDAY AND FRIDAY: LIVE MUSIC

Ex-Black Panther supporters vow to keep fighting

PHILADELPHIA (AFP) - Supporters of ex-Black Panther militant Mumia Abu-Jamal pledged yesterday to continue efforts to secure his release from prison for the murder of a white police officer in 1981.

The announcement came days after Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams announced he would not seek the death penalty against Abu-Jamal. Prosecutors said the move meant Abu-Jamal, 57, would instead spend the rest of his life in prison.

"A lot of people looked at that and thought it was a victory," said Ramona Africa, a member of a radical Philadelphia organization closely aligned with efforts to free Abu-Jamal.

"Wrong. Our fight ain't over. Nobody can relax with these latest events or hallucinate that all is right in the world."

Supporters believe that

Abu-Jamal, a former journalist, is innocent and was framed for the murder in the racially charged case.

"The world understands what Seth Williams does not," said Johanna Fernandez, a professor of American history at Baruch College. "Mumia's trial from beginning to end was riddled with violations."

Abu-Jamal was convicted in 1982 of the killing and sentenced to death. Over the next three decades, the case was subject to numerous appeals.

A US appeals court ordered a new sentencing hearing over concerns that instructions given to the jury were misleading. Then the US Supreme Court declined to hear the case.

Faced by the impasse, prosecutors said they would not seek a new death penalty hearing, which would likely be followed by another drawn-out appeals process.

UN hits back at Assad over Syria deaths



UNITED NATIONS (AFP) - UN chief Ban Ki-moon yesterday hit back at Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's attacks on the world body, while his human rights chief said lives could have been saved if the Security Council had acted earlier over the Syria crackdown.

Ban and UN rights chief Navi Pillay gave a stern response to Assad's outspoken dismissal of the United Nations this week. They insisted that claims of more than 4,000 dead in the assault on protesters were "very credible" and that Assad should let UN investigators into the country.

Ban told reporters during a trip to Kenya that he could not believe that fewer than 4,000 people had been killed, as Assad claims.

"All the credible information is that more than 4,000 people have been killed by the government forces. The high commissioner for human rights has made it already clear through all the various sources, very credible sources," Ban said.

In an interview with US television this week, Assad dismissed the UN death toll and

only said that 1,100 soldiers and police had been killed. He denied any responsibility for the government crackdown.

"Who said that the United Nations is a credible institution?" Assad declared.

Ban responded that human rights violations in Syria have been dealt with "on a very impartial, fair, objective and credible basis."

Picture, courtesy of AFP, released by the official Syrian Arab News Agency shows a thick plume of smoke rising above an oil refinery, situated to the west of the flashpoint city of Homs on December 8, 2011. Armed "terrorists" have blown up an oil pipeline west of the flashpoint Syrian city of Homs, state media reported, but an anti-regime group said the government was behind the blast.

China says 'difficulties' with Norway persist

BEIJING (AFP) - China said yesterday relations with Norway remained "difficult", a year after downgrading ties with Oslo in response to the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to jailed dissident Liu Xiaobo.

"The difficulties between China and Norway are because the Norwegian government made the wrong decision

when the Nobel Peace Committee gave the award to Liu Xiaobo," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Hong Lei said.

"We hope the Norwegian side will make practical efforts to resume the development of the bilateral relationship," he told reporters.

His remarks came as five Nobel Peace Prize winners

launched a campaign to free Liu, saying they feared Beijing was silencing his family and friends and the world would forget his plight.

Liu, the first Chinese citizen to win the Peace Prize, was sentenced to 11 years behind bars in 2009 after authoring Charter 08, a manifesto signed by thousands seeking greater rights in the communist nation.

The decision to award him the Nobel infuriated Beijing, which suspended talks with Oslo on a free trade pact and ordered strict and time-consuming veterinary controls on Norwegian salmon.

In Oslo, the government said it had "taken note" of China's viewpoint but did not announce any concrete measures.

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Bosnian war victims praise Angelina Jolie's movie

SARAJEVO (AFP) - Bosnian war victims' associations yesterday hailed Angelina Jolie's directorial debut, a wartime love story set in Bosnia shown at a special screening here, as objective and sincere.

"This movie is deeply moving for the victims who experienced all of these things," Murat Tahirovic, who heads an association of prisoners of war, told AFP.

"It is completely objective and it really tells the facts of what happened during the war."

The movie, "In the Land of Blood and Honey," which the Hollywood superstar filmed in 2010, is a love story between a Muslim woman and a Serb man set against the background of Bosnia's 1992-1995 inter-ethnic war.

The film caused controversy in Bosnia when local media speculated that it was the story of a Muslim rape victim who falls in love with her Serb attacker. The rumours prompted angry reactions from some victims' organisations, including several who have now praised the film after finally seeing it.

To allay the fears of war victims about the film, it was

shown to several of local representatives at a special screening in Sarajevo Thursday, closed to the media and the general public.

"She really succeeded in telling the story of the whole war in her film and to show the most characteristic situations that detainees faced -- mass executions, rapes, (being used as) human shields and all the other horrors," Tahirovic said.

The international preview took place on Monday in New York and the movie will open in the United States on December 23.

The head of an association of mothers of Srebrenica massacre victims, who had earlier spoken out against Jolie after the media rumours, said it was "really an excellent movie".

"It will never be possible to make a movie that would show everything that went on in Bosnia during the war," Hatidza Mehmedovic told AFP.

"But this movie is objective and sincere. It is a difficult movie but it sends a strong message. I want to thank Angelina for her intellectual and financial investment in making this movie that will tell the world the truth about Bosnia's war," she said.

Moscow braces for record anti-Putin rally



AFP photo shows riot police detaining an opposition activist during an unauthorized rally, in Saint-Petersburg, late on December 6. (AFP PHOTO)

MOSCOW (AFP) - Tens of thousands of Russians prepared yesterday to hold their biggest protest yet over a contested election that has sent Moscow's relations with Washington spiralling to a three-year low.

Today's rally in Moscow -- sanctioned by the police after

days of talks with the opposition -- is expected to draw around 30,000 people to a square across the river from the Kremlin following last weekend's legislative polls.

But the opposition is also organising rallies in at least 14 other major cities in a rare outpouring of mistrust in a system

put in place by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin when he first became president in 2000.

Sunday's vote was narrowly won by Putin's ruling party but accompanied by a flood of video footage shot by ordinary Russians and posted on the Internet appearing to show ballot stuffing and other widespread manipulation.

Sunday's vote was narrowly won by Putin's ruling party but accompanied by a flood of video footage shot by ordinary Russians and posted on the Internet appearing to show ballot stuffing and other widespread manipulation.

The protests that followed have posed a surprise challenge to Putin and saw the Russian strongman on Thursday launch a lacerating attack on US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for her expressions of concern.

Putin accused Clinton of deliberately sending a signal to the opposition to protest and the State Department of paying Russian groups to find fault with the elections.

Scotland storm leaves 50,000 without power

GLASGOW (AFP) - Engineers in Scotland yesterday battled to restore electricity to almost 50,000 homes left without power after a huge storm wreaked havoc and sparked travel chaos.

Winds of up to 165 miles (265 kilometres) an hour uprooted trees, flipped vehicles and caused a wind turbine to burst into flames during the first big storm of the British winter on Thursday.

Flights were grounded, drivers were advised to avoid roads across large parts of central Scotland, train services were cut and thousands of schools were shut.

More than 1,300 engineers, many drafted in from across



Britain, were struggling to restore electricity to homes across Scotland, Scotland's Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said.

AFP photo shows schoolchildren dodging the waves created by storm force winds at Cardswell Bay, Gourock, in western Scotland.



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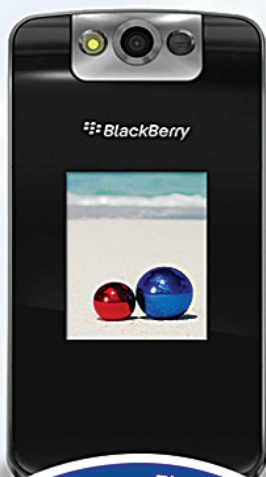


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PICKLES



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ACROSS

1. Energy cartel: abbr.
5. Glimpse
9. Lingerie item
12. Daughter of Uranus and Gaea
13. Semicircular recess
14. Prosectorium, for short
15. Dimwit
17. Uno
18. Squiggly
19. Unsaid
21. Hindu social class
24. Listen attentively
25. First name in spoon-bending
26. Scruff
29. Restaurant star
32. Delineate
34. Impair
35. Make healthy
36. Desk item
37. Sneering rocker Billy
39. Kin of rd. and blvd.
40. Put down
42. Word before finger or after thumb
44. "Private Parts" author Howard
46. Deutschmark successor
48. Fiery
49. Clown
54. Most-watched

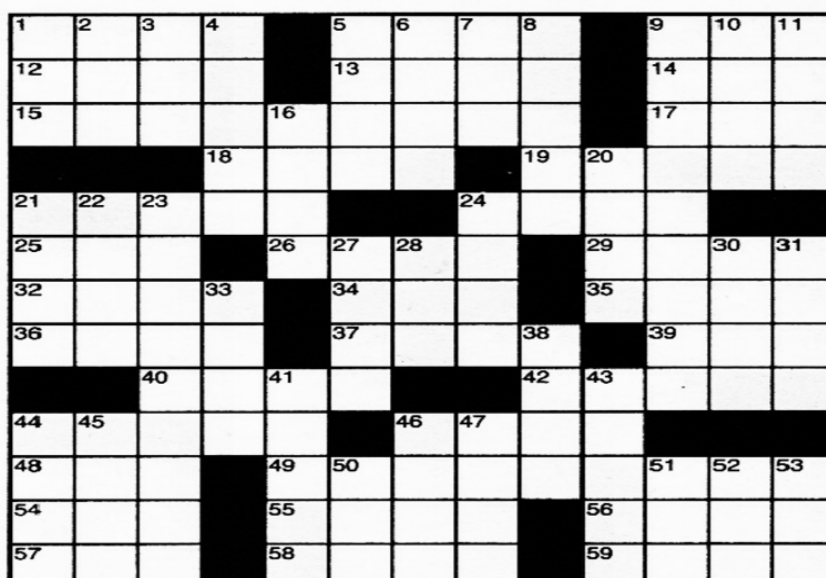
- judge of '95
55. Hobo transportation
56. Ancient Syria
57. Fellows
58. Letterman's hometown, for short
59. Hornet's home

DOWN

1. Sphere, poetically
2. Greek letter
3. Poet's "eternally"
4. Plebe
5. Weaver or Warren
6. Neuter an animal
7. Frat letter

8. Busybody
9. Oaf
10. Hindu princess
11. Aid and —
16. Existed
20. Curved opening
21. Unification Church, e.g.
22. Solo at La Scala
23. Dodo
24. Gilgamesh or Beowulf, e.g.
27. Centrally located
28. Tablet of paper
30. Roof projection
31. Make a muscle

33. Close
38. Former coin of Italy
41. Large lemur
43. Baseball's Ryan
44. Wedge of metal
45. Canvas carryall
46. "Ghost World" girl
47. Gruesome
50. Holm of "The Sweet Hereafter"
51. Wrath
52. "God's Son" rapper
53. Prime meridian hr.

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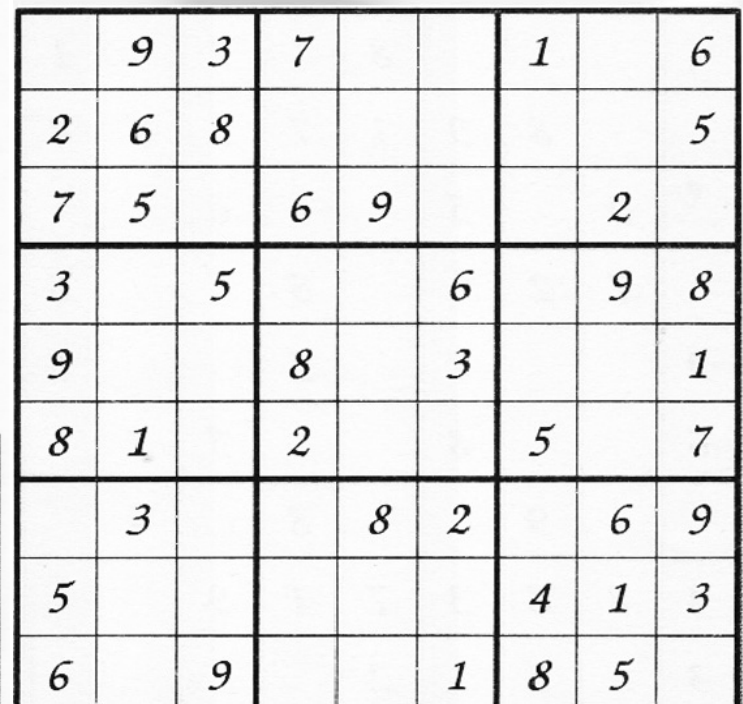
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Sudoku



SOLUTION

7	5	8	1	4	6	2	9	3
4	1	2	9	6	7	8	5	3
6	9	3	7	5	4	1	8	2
2	4	5	6	3	9	1	7	8
1	7	9	8	2	5	3	4	6
8	6	7	9	1	4	5	2	3
3	2	4	5	6	9	1	7	8
5	3	6	1	7	8	9	2	4
9	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

Finance

EU leaders back euro crisis pact, but Britain stays out



Britain Prime Minister David Cameron (L) and Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte gesture before the start of a working session during the summit. (AFP PHOTO)

BRUSSELS (AFP) - European Union leaders banded together yesterday to back tighter budget policing in a desperate bid to save the eurozone, with Britain left isolated after it vetoed a new EU treaty.

After years of foot-dragging on deepening integration, 26 of the 27 EU states signalled their willingness to join a "new fiscal compact" to resolve the crisis threatening to crack apart the monetary union.

But the deal came with a heavy political price when non-euro Britain resisted a Franco-German drive to enshrine new budget rules in a modified EU treaty to carve them into stone.

"The British were already not in the euro, and in that respect, we are used to this situation," said German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Merkel said she was "very pleased" most had agreed the pact that plans to impose near automatic sanctions on debt and deficit delinquents.

"We have learned from the mistakes of the past," she said as EU leaders wrapped up two days of marathon talks.

Some leaders hope the pact will convince the European Central Bank to drop its reluctance to use its full arsenal against the crisis after ECB president Mario Draghi called

for a "new fiscal compact" last week.

Draghi dubbed the summit decisions a "very good outcome" for the eurozone.

Many analysts see the ECB, with its power to print money, as the single currency's best hope after eurozone leaders struggled to boost the firepower of their bailout fund to one trillion euros.

The 17 eurozone countries signed up to the pact while nine other EU nations "indicated the possibility to take part in this process" after consulting their parliaments, EU leaders said in a statement.

Hungary had originally voiced reluctance, while Sweden and the Czech Republic were undecided.

The new deal, to be adopted by March through an intergovernmental agreement, was put to the entire 27-nation bloc in the interests of maintaining unity.

"Except for one, all are considering participation," said EU president Herman Van Rompuy. "It is unfortunate that we missed the chance to have a full-fledged treaty change, but having said that we will make the best of it."

French President Nicolas Sarkozy said British Prime Minister David Cameron's bid to halt ongoing EU efforts to curb the City of London's huge

financial services sector was "unacceptable."

Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti agreed and added that Britain had "shut itself out" and now faced "certain isolation."

Cameron argued that since London could not secure safeguards for its vital financial sector, "it is better to be on the outside."

He later told British broadcasters: "We are not being excluded, we are in the European Union, we're a leading member of the single market."

A square mile in central London is home to 75 percent of Europe's entire financial services industry, but the British government is resisting French and German moves to impose a financial transactions tax, as well as new regulations controlling trading.

European stock markets pushed higher after the agreement was announced but the euro wavered and government financing costs rose. US shares opened higher too.

Asian markets dropped as investors nervously awaited the final outcome of the marathon EU summit. Tokyo closed down 1.48 percent and Hong Kong slumped 2.73 percent.

The accord, which is to include automatic sanctions that can only be blocked by a majority of powerful states, aims to end past practices of overspending responsible for the two-year debt crisis ravaging Europe.

Officials said they would have to iron out complex legal issues posed by an intergovernmental arrangement since the institutions that would police budgets, the European Commission and the EU Court of Justice, represent all 27 states.

While the leaders split over treaty changes, they pledged to pump 200 billion euros (\$267 billion) into IMF coffers to help the eurozone, which is struggling to boost its own rescue fund to one trillion euros.

The ECB would act as an agent for the bailout fund, the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF).

The EFSF's successor, the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), will come into force earlier than first mooted in July 2012, with a lending capacity of 500 billion euros.

A German-led drive to make the private sector accept losses in future rescues was abandoned.

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US threatens sanctions over Airbus subsidies

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The United States threatened sanctions yesterday against the European Union as it rejected Brussels' claim it had eliminated certain subsidies to Airbus deemed illegal by the WTO.

Not only had the EU failed to comply with a World Trade Organization ruling against subsidies to Airbus, European governments have even granted it new subsidies, US Trade Representative Ron Kirk said.

Washington said EU documentation filed with the World Trade Organization "appears to show that the EU has not with-

drawn the subsidies in question and has, in fact, granted new subsidies to Airbus' development and production of large civil aircraft."

Kirk announced the US would seek "consultations" with the EU over the matter, and threatened to impose sanctions as it seeks to defend US aircraft manufacturer Boeing, the key rival of France-based Airbus.

Washington said it was seeking a green light from the WTO to impose "countermeasures" annually, in an amount that would vary but in a "recent period" would have been \$7-10 billion.

US lawmakers look to block EU 'bailout'

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US Republicans yesterday denounced any US-funded International Monetary Fund "bailout" of debt-stricken Europe and ramped up efforts to scrap a \$108 billion line of credit to the IMF.

"Forcing American taxpayers to bail out bloated welfare states in Europe is unconscionable and immoral," Republican Senator Tom Coburn said, warning that "a bailout will prolong, not ease, Europe's burdens."

Coburn's comments came as 26 Senate Republicans un-

veiled the "No More IMF Bailouts Act," that aims to rescind a \$108 billion line of credit that Washington extended to the body in 2009 and to require Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner to block future IMF rescue efforts that rely on US funds.

A similar effort was underway in the US House, where Republican Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers led a group of 23 lawmakers in pushing her legislation to scrap the line of credit.

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YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer



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Current as of:	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
12/09/2011				
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	0.98	1.00	1.002
Canada	CAD	1.720	1.740	1.760
Britain	GBP	2.730	2.780	2.840
Switzerland	CHF	1.9315	1.9387	1.9467
Netherlands	EUR	2.3622	2.3838	2.4077
Sweden	SEK	0.2544	0.2616	0.2696
Denmark	DKK	0.3110	0.3182	0.3262
Norway	NOK	0.3009	0.3081	0.3161
Japan	JPY	227.24	229.32	231.62
(per 10,000)				
All rates for amounts up to AWG 100,000.00 per item.				

Grand finale of Renaissance Mall & Marketplace Crystal & Seaport Casinos Island Xtravaganza 2011 campaign



Friday, December 2, the Renaissance Mall & Marketplace and Crystal & Seaport Casinos hosted the dramatic closing of their Island Xtravaganza 2011 campaign. The event attracted a large part of the community who enjoyed excellent opportuni-

ties to shop for those special Christmas gifts at bargain prizes and the added benefit of winning fabulous prizes.

The famous Curacao band 'Doble R' entertained those present for the grand finale, the drawing of the winners, followed by an exciting fire-

works display; at precisely 9:00 p.m. the winners of the campaign were picked from the raffle tumbler.

Congratulations to the lucky grand prize winner of a the MG 6 Fastback car, Anthony Hagedoorn;

2 winner - Mrs. Stella Maria Lioe -A-Thjam who won a 7 day cruise for 2 on-board Allure of the Seas;

3 - Jenneline Farro winner of a ticket for 2 to Miami;

4 - Eugenia Amparo Acevedo Holguin with tickets for 2 to Curacao;

5 - Isalys C. Roosberg received a \$1000 gift certificate from Renaissance Mall & Marketplace;

6 - Gay Spellens, won a dinner for 2 voucher from L.G Smith's Steak and Chop House;

#7 - Rose-Ann Padron Croes with a lunch for 4 persons voucher from Aquarius Restaurant; and final winner-

Carroll S. Guiano received a gift certificate for a Couples Massage from Okeanos Spa. Photos show the festive ambiance during the Renaissance Mall & Marketplace and Crystal & Seaport Casinos Island Xtravaganza 2011 final event.



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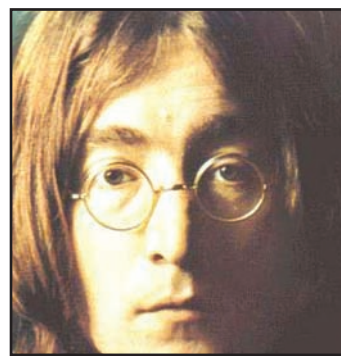
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Starr urges tougher gun laws on Lennon death anniversary



LONDON (AFP) - Ringo Starr called for tougher sentences for gun users as he marked the 31st anniversary Thursday of Beatles bandmate John Lennon's death.

The drummer unveiled his psychedelic design for the Non Violence Foundation's "knotted gun" symbol, posing by a statue of it at an event in London.

"It should be that if you're caught with a gun or before you use it that it should be a higher sentence than what they get now," the 71-year-old said.

"I can't stand up and dictate to the world: 'it's over -- no more guns'. I can just do what I do, and there's another side to the story which is peace and love." He spoke of his shock in hearing of Lennon's death.

Lennon was shot dead outside his New York apartment by Mark Chapman on December 8, 1980 as he returned home with his artist wife Yoko Ono. "My stepchildren called

saying 'Something's happened to John'. And you don't think 'He's been killed', so you say 'Well, what's happened?'," Starr said. "They called me back. They called and said 'John's been killed. He's been shot and he's dead.'"

Starr flew from the Bahamas to New York to see if he could be of assistance following his friend's death. He looked after Lennon's son Sean for a while but later left feeling having another Beatle around was not helping the situation.

"You don't know what to do. Your emotions are so whacked out. You don't believe it really, but you know it's happening. It's just such a mad moment," he said. "Yoko was there, of course, and she just asked us to look after Sean, who was a baby, and that's all we did for a couple of hours. "In the end it was so crazy that we got on another plane that night and went to Los Angeles." Gesturing to the statue, he said: "It was a bad day. But it was a bad day because someone took one of these and shot John."

1960s British pop legends The Beatles -- drummer Starr, rhythm guitarist Lennon, bassist Paul McCartney and lead guitarist George Harrison -- are the best-selling band in history.

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The great perks of gaming at Cool Casino in the Riu Resort has created a dedicated clientele; ask them what they like about the cozy casino, and they don't know where to start! The free slot tournaments every Sunday? Major pay-offs in their weekly Blackjack tournaments every Tuesday and Friday? Ladies' night every Wednesday with entertainment from great local bands? Or perhaps just the terrific benefits of being "One Cool Member" which earns players bonus points towards additional activities, free dinners, or best of all: cash!

December is a particularly great time to sign up to be a Cool Customer, as bonus points, which when

redeemed, not only gives terrific rewards but raffle tickets for their holiday drawing with fabulous prizes. The final drawing will be on Friday, December 16, during the live TV broadcast of "E Regalo" with local media personality



Ruben Garcia and Aruba's own "Sean Kingston" – Biggy Boy, who will be launching his new CD live from Cool Casino.

The casino opens daily at 10:00 AM and on Saturdays

and Sundays, all are greeted with an early morning "Kaffie Klatch" and triple points when they use their membership cards.

Add to all this free drinks while testing the slots or trying your hand at the tables, and the opportunity to enjoy exclusive pay-per-view major sporting events at one of their dozens of plasma screens, and you can understand why loyal patrons find Cool Casino THE fun place to play. Slot machines are open from 10:00 AM until 4:00 AM daily, and gaming tables open at 5:00 PM; ask for their schedule of special events and bonuses, as there are so many to choose from, but every day offers something to get the adrenaline flowing!



Parents Guide to Skin Protection



It's important to protect your children's skin from the damaging effects of the sun. No matter what they're doing or what time of year it is, if they are outdoors, they need to be protected.

Aruba is one of the places in the world where the sun is the strongest. Located only 12.5 degrees north of the equator, the sun shines with maximum strength and penetrates the atmosphere with a maximum amount of UV rays. What most people don't know on water and sand, which means that even in the shade you need protection.

Protecting the skin from the sun during childhood and adolescence is important in reducing cancer risks later in life. By building safe sun habits into your family's daily routine, you will make your children understand and get used to being protected against the sun and they will become more aware of the harmful effects it can have to their skin. Parents should take the lead by giving the good example; children will respond better when they see their parents protecting their skin as well.

Important recommendations:

- Wear protective clothing when out in the sun. Choose shirts and slacks made of tightly woven fabrics that you can't see through when held up to light.

- Cover up with Hats. Choose hats that shade your child's face, neck and ears.

- Apply Sunscreen every day on skin that is not protected by clothing or a hat. Choose a sunscreen with a high Sun Protection Factor (SPF) such as Aruba Aloe's Waterproof SPF 30 sunscreen for maximum protection. For babies and children under 2 years old, make sure to use a special sunscreen that gives extra protection for the sensitive skin such as "Waterproof Babies SPF 30" from Aruba Aloe. Remember to reapply after swimming, sweating or toweling dry if you use a sunscreen that is not waterproof.

- Use sunscreen even on hazy or overcast days.

- Keep an extra bottle of sunscreen in the car.

- Pack a bottle of sunscreen in your child's bag.

- Use Sunglasses that block UV rays and protect the eyes and the surrounding tender skin.

- Play in the Shade. The



sun's rays are generally strongest from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. If your children are outdoors, make sure their skin is protected.

- Teach your children the shadow rule. When outside, if your shadow is shorter than you are, it means that the sun is high in the sky and the UV rays are most intense.

- Protect children younger than 6 months of age with clothing and keep them in the shade.

For more advice on how to best protect your and your children's skin against the sun, please call Aruba Aloe: 588-3222 or visit the website www.ArubaAloe.com

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SPORTS

Football: Real plan all-out assault on Barcelona

MADRID (AFP) - Real Madrid will take the fight to their fierce rivals Barcelona today, fielding three strikers in an aggressive 4-3-3 formation for the first clasico of the season, the club said.

Assistant coach Aitor Karanka told a news conference Friday that Real will play prolific Portuguese goalscorer

Cristiano Ronaldo up front alongside Angel di Maria and either Gonzalo Higuain or Karim Benzema.

"It is not just a match like any other. Obviously it is different," Karanka said of the biggest match in the league.

"But we are not going to change our way of working whatever the result is tomorrow."

row."

Barca have generally come out on top in direct clashes between the arch rivals since the arrival of Pep Guardiola as coach in 2008, including a humiliating 5-0 pasting of Real a year ago in Barcelona.

Real go into this season's first clasico with a three-point lead at the top of the league and a game in hand, looking for their 16th consecutive victory in all competitions.

Karanka forestalled any complacency, however.

"We could have a lead of four, six or nine points, that would not change our principles," he said. "We have to go after the three points like we always do."

Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho will have a full squad to choose from save for Portuguese fullback Ricardo Carvalho for the game.

The club said Carvalho has pulled a ligament in his right knee and will be unavailable.

Also plagued with back problems this season, former Porto and Chelsea man Carvalho has not played for two months.

Leafs sold..

continued from pg 16

"Sports content is king," Mohamed said. "Nobody wants to watch a game two days later. Between the two organizations I can't think of anybody that can bring live sports to Canadians wherever they are without missing a second."

BCE president George Cope said the games represent the best possible shows to bring viewers.

"We believe, increasingly, that live content is going to be more and more important in the technology world and there is no better live content than the professional sports that we are talking about," Cope said.

Football: I'm no Pele says Neymar

TOYOTA (AFP) - Brazilian star Neymar admitted Friday he could never reach Pele's level and weighed into a row between the footballing legend and Diego Maradona, saying Lionel Messi was the best in the world.

The top-rated 19-year-old Neymar, who has been at the centre of a row between Pele and Maradona over whether he is better than Barca ace Messi, said the reigning world player of the year was superior "at the moment".


"I do believe Messi is the best player at the moment," the talented Santos striker told a packed press conference in Japan after jetting in for the Club World Cup, where he could come face-to-face with Messi in the final.

And Neymar dismissed any comparisons with the iconic Pele, who remains idolised for his exploits for Santos and Brazil.

"He's the one and only, he's the king of football," said Neymar, sporting his trademark blond mohawk. "To reach his level is something I don't think I can do."

Neymar has been described as technically better than Messi by Pele, earning a mocking response from Argentine great Maradona, who said the Brazilian must have mixed up his medication.


The Club World Cup has been billed as a clash between Argentina's Messi, shortlisted once again for the Ballon D'Or, and his exciting young challenger from Brazil.




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NBA: Stern's denial of Paul trade sparks rebukes

NEW YORK (AFP) - NBA commissioner David Stern defended his decision to stop the New Orleans Hornets from trading Chris Paul to the Los Angeles Lakers in a three-team swap on Friday as critics ripped the move.

The Hornets, who are owned by the league as they search for a buyer for the club, had agreed on Thursday to a deal involving Houston and the Lakers that would have sent Paul, an All-Star point guard, to Los Angeles.

Stern wiped out the planned trade and on Friday said that he made the move in the best interest of the Hornets.

"Since the NBA purchased the New Orleans Hornets, final responsibility for significant management decisions lies with the commissioner's office in consultation with team chairman Jac Sperling," Stern said in a statement.

But critics say Stern was bowing to pressure from other club owners, notably Cleveland Cavaliers owner Dan Gilbert, who lost superstar LeBron James to Miami last year.

ESPN was among several media outlets that obtained a copy of an e-mail from Gilbert to Stern calling the Paul trade to the Lakers a "travesty" and that all 29 club owners should

vote on the deal.

"I just don't see how we can allow this trade to happen. I know the vast majority of owners feel the same way that I do," Gilbert wrote to Stern,

"Over the next three seasons this deal would save the Lakers approximately \$20 million in salaries and approximately \$21 million in luxury taxes.

"I cannot remember ever seeing a trade where a team got by far the best player in the trade and saved over \$40 million in the process."

Stern said that the decision to halt the trade was not made because he was pressured by other club owners.

"In the case of the trade proposal that was made to the Hornets for Chris Paul, we decided, free from the influence of other NBA owners, that the team was better served with Chris in a Hornets uniform than by the outcome of the terms of that trade."

Paul, who had been expected to seek a move from the Hornets once free agency began, would have gone to the Lakers with the Hornets obtaining Lamar Odom from the Lakers.

The Hornets would also

have obtained forward Luis Scola, guards Kevin Martin and Goran Dragic and a first-round NBA Draft pick from Houston, which would have obtained Spanish playmaker Pau Gasol from the Lakers.

NBA Hall of Fame superstar Magic Johnson posted a note on his Twitter account saying, "Wrong decision by Stern and the owners. Sends a bad message to fans. Was a good deal for the Lakers, Hornets and Rockets - everyone got better."

NBA champion Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban told a Dallas radio station that the just-ended lockout was undertaken to avoid such deals that pull superstar players from teams that play in smaller-revenue markets.

"One of the goals of the lockout was to say that small-market teams now have a chance to keep their players, and the rules were designed to give them that opportunity," Cuban said.

"So to all of a sudden have a league-owned team trade their best player, particularly after having gone out and sold a ton of tickets in that market, that's not the kind of signal you want to send."

NBA: Magic use new clause to release Arenas

ORLANDO (AFP) - The Orlando Magic released guard Gilbert Arenas on Friday by using the National Basketball Association's new Collective Bargaining Agreement amnesty provision.

The new amnesty provision allows every NBA team a one-time provision to waive a player's remaining contract from the salary cap and luxury tax.

Arenas, who has \$62 million left on the final three years of his contract, was traded to Orlando by the Washington Wizards for Rashard Lewis last season.

The 29-year-old Arenas originally signed a six-year contract worth \$111 million.

Arenas has played in 535 career NBA games with Golden State, Washington and Orlando, averaging 21.2 points, 5.4 assists and 4.0 rebounds a game.

He averaged 10.8 points and 3.9 assists a game over 70 starts last season for the Wizards and Magic, but produced only 8.0 points and 3.2 assists a game in 49 appearances for

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Broncos go.....

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PITTSBURGH: Jason Worilds #93 of the Pittsburgh Steelers sacks Colt McCoy #12 of the Cleveland Browns at Heinz Field on December 8, 2011

The Raiders will be without star running back Darren McFadden against a confident Packers team that is seeking to win every game this season.

The New York Giants will try to reverse a four-game losing skid when they face Dallas.

Third-string rookie quarterback T.J. Yates will try to move Houston closer to their first playoff berth, division title and maybe even a first-round bye in the post-season

if they can beat Cincinnati.

The Bengals are in the hunt for a wild-card spot.

In other games it is Indianapolis at Baltimore, Kansas City at New York Jets, Minnesota at Detroit, Atlanta at Carolina, Philadelphia at Miami, New Orleans at Tennessee, Tampa Bay at Jacksonville, New England at Washington, San Francisco at Arizona, Buffalo at San Diego. St. Louis is at Seattle on Monday night.

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NFL: Tebow's Broncos go for sixth straight win

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Quarterback Tim Tebow and the Denver Broncos seek to win their sixth straight game on Sunday as they host a struggling Chicago Bears side trying to avoid a third successive NFL defeat.

Tebow continues to defy his critics by turning Denver into serious playoff contenders. He has thrown 10 touchdowns with just one interception and has Denver in position to win six in a row for the first time in two years.

"I know I have been saying this for the past couple weeks but I'm so proud to have a team like this," said Tebow.

"When adversity hits and you're not doing good, most teams pull apart and they're not on the same page anymore. But our team grows closer together."

Denver didn't look like a post-season team when it had a 1-4 record earlier this season.

But the Broncos have won six of seven since Tebow replaced the departed Kyle Orton as the No. 1 quarterback on October 23.

After coming back again last Sunday to win 35-32 at Minnesota, the Broncos moved into a tie with Oakland atop the AFC West.

"It's been a fun ride," said linebacker Mario Haggan, who recorded 12 tackles and returned an interception for a touchdown against the Vikings. "This team is close, believes, has a lot of character, but we're not done."

Denver currently owns the tiebreaker over Oakland thanks to better divisional and conference records. Denver beat Oakland 38-24 on

November 6.

The Bears play three of their final four games on the road. They have lost quarterback Jay Cutler to a broken thumb, and could also be without running back Matt Forte for the remainder of the regular season.

Forte, who sprained a knee last week, is the league leader with 1,487 total offensive yards.

"Everybody has to be up to the challenge and work through it," Forte said. "I think the guys on our team are able to work through that. They have a lot of resilience. I think they'll be fine. They're not really too down about it."

In other key games Oakland will have their hands full with undefeated Green Bay.

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Raptors, Leafs sold to telecom firms in \$1.3billion deal

TORONTO (AFP) - Canada's largest telecommunications firms, Rogers Communications and BCE Incorporated, announced on Friday they have agreed to buy the NBA Toronto Raptors and NHL Toronto Maple Leafs.

The purchase from the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan for about \$1.3 billion dollars, one of the biggest deals in North American sport, gives rivals Rogers and BCE each 37.5 percent of Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment.

Larry Tanenbaum, a Toronto businessman, raised his minority stake in the organization to 25 percent and will remain chairman of the group.

Also part of the purchase

were the Air Canada Centre, home arena for both teams, the television stations owned by each club, the Maple Leafs' top development club and Major League Soccer's Toronto FC.

Rogers owns Major League Baseball's Toronto Blue Jays and their home stadium, the former SkyDome, and Canada's Sportsnet television network.

Rogers chief executive officer Nadir Mohamed said it made sense for the rival cable, wireless and Internet companies to come together for a deal of such magnitude for Canada's most watched NHL club and its only NBA team.

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